

**MARY ELIZABETH JONES, ED.D.**

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December 26, 2001

Renata Hesse  
Trial Attorney  
Anti-Trust Division  
U.S. Department of Justice  
601 D Street, N.W., Suite 1200  
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Trial Attorney Hesse:

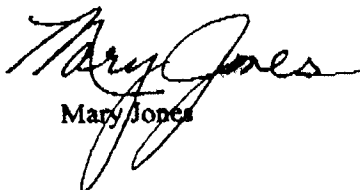
I appreciate the opportunity to state my support for the settlement agreement in U.S. v. Microsoft because of the tremendous benefit it offers to disadvantaged children through their education system, and because it finally brings to rest a court action which has absorbed enough time and resources from our government and from a corporation which is vital to our nation's troubled economy. I have worked for many years in South Dakota as a mental therapist and in education, and I agree with the view that this settlement will repair what is known as "the digital divide" which exists among economic classes in our society, and it seeks to remedy the issues which have been found to be valid thus far in the court process.

It is my understanding that the purpose of anti-trust laws and processes is to protect consumers. However, I think it needs to be clearly underscored in the consideration of this settlement that none of the Microsoft Corporation's actions have been found to have harmed American consumers. Frankly, it appears to many of us that those who wish to jettison this valuable settlement and continue pursuing an even more severe victory are actually seeking to tear down Microsoft's earned place as a leader in the information technologies industry. If such a severe victory is achieved, I believe the damage in the long-term will be against the entire information technologies industry and to the American economy.

Microsoft Corporation is an important part of America's economic muscle and it is obvious to the casual observer that its marketplace competitors are working diligently to weaken the industry leader with the hope that a short-term gain will result. I think it is worth noting that while there are nine states which seek to prolong this issue beyond its four-year run in the process, nine other states and the U.S. Department of Justice have decided this issue should be settled now. It would be best for this nation's economy and the industry to settle this issue with this fair settlement and move ahead.

Thank you very much for considering my thoughts on this important matter.

Sincerely,

  
Mary Jones